

### Leadership Remarks



**Lisa Ram3rez, EdD**

Director

USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

Dr. Lisa R. Ram3rez recently served as the Chief Innovation Officer for Lubbock ISD. She relocated to Lubbock from Washington, DC where she served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. In this role, she oversaw a broad range of management, policy, and program functions.

Dr. Ram3rez also served as the Director of the Office of Migrant Education and the Director for the Office of School Support and Rural Programs in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). Dr. Ram3rez joined the U.S. Department of Education in 2006, when she was appointed Group Leader for the discretionary grants team, which plans and coordinates the High School Equivalency Program (HEP), College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and the then active Migrant Education Even Start (MEES) program. After only one and a half years in her new role, she was promoted to Director of the Office of Migrant Education, where she led the planning and coordination of all aspects of the various programs, including grant and contract administration, policy, evaluation, and special initiatives. In 2015, she added the Office of School Support and Rural Programs to her portfolio. Even with dwindling resources including a reduction in staff, Dr. Ram3rez has continued to inspire the staff in such a way that they have developed their own leadership skills and have become motivated to produce consistently higher and more effective results, both inside the office and with the field of grantees.

The daughter of migrant workers and a former migrant worker herself, Dr. Ram3rez left the fields to serve in the United States Army Reserves. She financed portions of her college education through the GI Bill and began her career as an educator in 1992, first as a middle and high school teacher in English and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in Texas, then serving as Assistant Principal and Principal. In 2004, Dr. Ram3rez took on the challenge of opening the Lubbock Independent School District's first charter campus, the Ram3rez Charter School. Dr. Lisa R. Ram3rez brings a unique combination of personal and professional experiences to help improve the academic success of students across the country. A dynamic, change agent at heart, Dr. Ram3rez has had a powerful impact on the various staffs and offices where she has worked. Correspondingly, Dr. Ramirez was recognized within the Department for her unique positive spirit, notable intelligence and outstanding leadership.

Born in Chicago, but a Texan at heart, Dr. Ram3rez received her B.A., M.Ed., and Ed.D. degrees from Texas Tech University, in Lubbock, Texas. A life-long learner, she is an alumna of the Executive Leadership program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the National Hispana Leadership Institute. She is also a Pahara-Aspen Institute Fellow. Dr. Ram3rez enjoys running, hiking, writing and the study of film/world cinema. Dr. Ram3rez currently lives with her husband, two children and two family dogs in Alexandria, Virginia.



**Barbara Glenn, Ph.D.**

Chief Executive Officer

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)

Dr. Barbara Glenn joined the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) as CEO in 2014. NASDA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association which represents the elected and appointed commissioners, secretaries, and directors of the departments of agriculture in all fifty states and four U.S. territories. Dr. Glenn is a scientist with decades of experience as a researcher, policy leader and advocate for agriculture. She previously held leadership positions with CropLife America and the Biotechnology Innovation Organization in Washington, DC. Earlier in her career she led governmental affairs for the Federation of Animal Science Societies. For 17 years, she conducted dairy cattle nutrition research for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. She was the first woman to serve as president of the American Society of Animal Science. Dr. Glenn holds a B.S. in animal science and a Ph.D. in ruminant nutrition from the University of Kentucky. Born in Lincoln, Nebraska and raised in Centerville, Ohio, Dr. Glenn developed a passion for agriculture from her parents and her involvement in 4-H. The Glenn's have three grown children who are 4-H alumni and live on a small farm in Maryland. Barb serves on various local boards for farm bureau, 4-H and ag education.



**Rob Larew**

President

National Farmers Union (NFU)

NFU President Rob Larew was elected National Farmers Union's 15th president during the organization's 118th anniversary convention in 2020. He previously serviced as NFU's Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Communications, and prior to his employment with NFU, served over 22 years in Congress and USDA. Larew was raised on a dairy farm in Greenville, West Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University with a Bachelor of Science in Dairy Science and completed graduate work in Agronomy at Pennsylvania State University.

## Partnerships Panel

**R. Brent Elrod**

National Program Leader – Community & Rural Development  
 Division of Family & Consumer Sciences  
 USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Brent Elrod is National Program Leader in the Institute of Youth, Families & Communities for the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Mr. Elrod's work supports a \$95M portfolio of research, education, and extension programs that emphasize improving the nation's health, nutrition, and family, youth and community quality of life in rural America through the coordination of grant programs, resources and partnerships.

In collaboration with the Land-Grant University System, Cooperative Extension Service, federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and small businesses, Elrod leads teams that coordinate and integrate the following research, education, and extension programs that address national food and agricultural science priorities:

- Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans (AgVets)
- Extension Risk Management Education (ERME)
- Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN)
- FRSAN – State Departments of Ag (FRSAN-SDA)
- Farm Business Management and Benchmarking (FBMB)
- Food and Agricultural Defense Initiative – Extension Disaster Education Network (FADI-EDEN)
- New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE)
- Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDC)
- Rural Health and Safety Education (RHSE)
- Small Business Innovative Research Phase I-II (SBIR)
- Smith Lever Special Needs (SLSN)
- eXtension Covid Immunization Training & Education (eXcite)
- Healthy Homes Partnership (HHP)
- Military REACH
- Early Learning Matters (ELM)
- Family Advocacy Program (FAP)
- Virtual Lab School (VLS)
- Military Families Learning Network (MFLN)
- Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness (CMFR)
- Joint Base San Antonio Substance Abuse Prevention (SAP)
- Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Curriculum Development and Metrics (YRRP)



**Pam Hess**  
Executive Director  
Arcadia Sustainable Food Project

Executive Director Pamela Hess has been with Arcadia since March 2013. She came to Arcadia from journalism. A career national security journalist, Pam covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the Pentagon and CIA with the Associated Press and United Press International. After a brief foray into national politics as a communications director on Capitol Hill, Pam returned to her first love: food and sustainable farms. In 2011, she took the helm of a local food and wine magazine that celebrated sustainable food and farming in the Capitol Foodshed, and in the course of it, met and fell in love with Arcadia. She brings to Arcadia a deep commitment to its mission, a large and expanding network of farmers and food advocates, and a great reputation within the sustainable food community.



**Courtney Cuthbertson, PhD**  
Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist  
Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Illinois  
North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center

Dr. Courtney Cuthbertson is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Illinois. As a sociologist, their research and outreach focus on social determinants of mental health and improving community mental health literacy, including in agricultural communities. They have conducted research on depression, anxiety, and suicide risk among farming populations and have ongoing projects related to COVID-19's mental health impacts on Illinois farmers. Dr. Cuthbertson is a co-director of the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center and has collaborated with USDA Farm Service Agency, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Farmers Union, and Farm Credit Council to create and offer farm stress trainings. They were the lead content developer for two farm stress programs through Michigan State University Extension which have now been offered to more than 2,000 people by Cooperative Extension Services in over 15 states. Dr. Cuthbertson serves on the board of the National Association for Rural Mental Health and the American Public Health Association's Intersectional Council for Suicide Prevention.



**Anna Seymour, MPA**  
Special Projects Manager, Commissioner's Office  
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

Anna Seymour currently serves as a Special Projects Manager in the Commissioner's Office of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). She has worked for the agency since 2014, serving under three appointed Commissioners in that time. Her work in the area of farmer stress began under the helm of USDA Deputy Secretary Jewel Bronaugh, helping to organize the Farmer Stress Task Force and its relevant activities.

Prior to her work at VDACS, Anna was employed at the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission where she worked as a legislative analyst, evaluating the operations and performance of state agencies and programs and co-authoring several reports on state spending, employee misclassification, and public education.

Anna graduated with a degree in International Affairs from James Madison University. She obtained a Master of Public Administration degree at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

### **Federal Partner Roundtable**



**Bill Ashton**

Director, Strategic Initiatives Division  
Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison (MVAL)  
USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

William B. Ashton was born in NYC, attended schools in Brooklyn and Queens. Upon graduation from St. Francis Prep in 1976, he joined the U.S. Navy. During his 23-year career he advanced from Seaman Recruit to Lieutenant Commander and retiring in 1999.

He had a very diverse career, qualifying in “Submarines” in 1978 onboard USS L. MENDEL RIVERS (SSN 686). Reassigned as the Nuclear MM Detailer in 1980. Served on the personal staff of the Chief of Naval Operations and attaining the grade of YN1 (SS). In 1984, received orders to Naval Research Laboratory Field Site Detachment and in 1986 commissioned an Ensign under the Limited Duty Officer Program (Administration).

First tour as an officer was onboard USS MCKEE (AS 41) as Personnel and Administrative Officer. Transferred to Submarine Squadron FOUR, Charleston, SC in 1989. In 1991 reassigned as the Administrative Secretary to the Chief of Naval Personnel. In 1993, reassigned as Administrative Assistant/Aide to the Deputy for Naval Training, Washington, DC. Receiving orders in 1994, he was transferred to Submarine Squadron SIX, Norfolk, VA. In 1996, he was transferred as Officer in Charge of Personnel Support Detachment, Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, HI. After a consolidation of all PSDs on the island, he became the OIC, PSD Hawaii. In 1997 was reassigned as OIC, PSD, Anacostia and in 1998 was reassigned for his final tour as Military Assistant to the Director, Defense Reform Initiative.

Upon retirement, he accepted a job as the Director of Operations for Winner International, manufacture and distributor of the steering wheel locking device “THE CLUB”. He also became the Vice President for Operations of Winner Advertising after 16 of 17 personnel left the company. Rebuilding the company within three months, he was then asked to take over as Chief Executive Officer/Director of Winner Institute of Arts and Science where the school attained candidacy for accreditation and Title IV funding under his leadership.

In 2002, he accepted a job as Assistant Officer in Charge of Personnel Support Activity Detachment, Washington, DC. In August 2004, he accepted a job at Commander Navy Installations Command as the PASS/Shore Corrections/TPU Program Branch Head. He took military pay timeliness from 54% to 98% during his tour. During this timeframe he became the Program Manager for Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) and Navy Mobilization Processing Sites in addition to his other duties. In 2013,



the PASS Program transferred Naval Personnel Command in Millington, TN and he accepted realignment as a Program Analyst for Environmental at CNIC.

During 2004, he was selected to serve on the Secretary of the Navy's Retiree Council for a period of three years. This Council reviews retiree's policies and makes recommendations to the Secretary.

From April 2015 to January 2018, he served as the Security Director for the Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command Headquarters to lead the Security efforts of the command. As the Director for Security, he is responsible for four divisions to include (Operations, Inspections, Information & Industrial and the Technology Protection & International Security).

He is currently serving as the Military Veteran Agricultural Liaison for the United States Department of Agriculture. William B. Ashton was named the first permanent Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison for the United States Department of Agriculture in January 2018. In his role as liaison, Ashton will guide USDA efforts to support veterans learn and succeed through agriculture, agribusiness, in rural communities, and beyond. He was recently transferred to be the Strategic Initiatives Division Director, which includes Youth Programs, Faith Based Initiatives, Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison and Special Initiatives.

He has been appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia to be the Fleet Reserve Association's representative to the Joint Leadership Council. The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations provides a vehicle for veteran's service organizations to collaborate with the Department of Veterans Services on meeting the needs of Virginia's veterans.

He is married to the former Debbie Lucas of Hagerstown, Maryland and has twin boys, Christopher and Brandon.



**Kimberly Nelson**

Regional Administrator – Region VII  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Department of Health and Human Services

Kimberly Nelson (Kim) is the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Regional Administrator serving Region 7: Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska, since 2015. Ms. Nelson has worked in the behavioral health care field since 1992. Her clinical work was early in her career and mainly focused on addiction services, initially in community-based settings in women's and children's residential programs in Kansas. She then moved into executive leadership roles primarily. Ms. Nelson provided leadership as program director in programs with criminal justice clients in community-based residential and outpatient settings, as well as with prison-based substance use disorder care.

Ms. Nelson was recruited to the state of Kansas with the Addiction and Prevention Services Division as the Medicaid Coordinator. As the liaison between the behavioral health and Medicaid divisions, her primary responsibility was to ensure Medicaid policy was aligned with the state goals for addiction services. This was accomplished via a pre-paid inpatient health plan; part of a 1915 b/c managed care waiver for behavioral health.

Ms. Nelson was part of the team that wrote the waiver, request for proposals, awarded the contract and then led the team that managed the contractor for the five years of this waiver.

As the state administration changed, after a brief time as the state's Substance Abuse Authority, in continuing roles of increasing responsibility, Ms. Nelson moved into the role of Director of Managed Care for the Behavioral Health and Disabilities division in the state. She helped implement a statewide comprehensive integrated managed care system in 2012 under an 1115 demonstration waiver that covered all services; including physical health, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports. Ms. Nelson shared in the management of this contract, leading the team that managed the aspects of this contract dedicated to behavioral health and long-term services and supports in the state. During her tenure with the state of Kansas, Ms. Nelson was part of the team that got the state plan amendment approved for implementation of Health Homes for those with severe mental illness. In her position of Vice President of Marketing and New Business Development for a large integrated health services provider in Kansas, prior to becoming the Region VII Administrator, Ms. Nelson lead the team that launched their Health Home program. Perhaps most importantly, Kim is a person in long-term recovery from addiction. She is a Licensed Addictions Counselor and a Certified Peer Support Specialist. She earned her bachelor's degree in Sociology and her master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Kansas.



**J. Latrice Hill**  
Director of Outreach  
USDA Farm Service Agency

Latrice Hill was selected to serve as the National Director of Outreach for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in 2013. As Director, she establishes program outreach policy and maintains oversight of FSA outreach activities nationwide.

Hill began her federal career as a county office clerk with FSA (formerly Farmers Home Administration). She later served in the positions of loan officer and district outreach coordinator where she was responsible for determining feasibility, assessing financial situations and risks, approving and servicing borrower farm loan accounts for six counties. With a strong background in communications and passion for serving others, Hill was later selected to serve as the FSA State Public Relations and Outreach Specialist, overseeing outreach activities in 71 counties. While in MS, Hill was appointed by two US Secretaries of Agriculture to serve on the National Advisory Committee for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers for three two-year terms.

Hill has received several awards and recognition for her collaborations and work with rural farmers, organizations and students. Notable accomplishments include the Emerson Congressional Hunger Center's Policy Leadership Award, Secretary's Award for work with local and regional food systems, Administrator's Team Award for Farm Bill Outreach and many others.

A native of Mississippi, Hill earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Belhaven University. She maintains residences in Virginia and Mississippi.

**Diane Hall, PhD, MSED**

Lead Behavioral Scientist  
Senior Scientist for Policy and Strategy  
Policy Research, Analysis, and Development Office (PRADO)  
Office of the Associate Director for Policy and Strategy  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Department of Health and Human Services

Diane M. Hall, PhD, MSED, is a lead behavioral scientist with the Prevention Practice and Translation Branch in the Division of Violence Prevention at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC). Dr. Hall's research interests include teen dating violence and intimate partner violence. In addition, she has worked with two of the Academic Centers of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention. As a lead behavioral scientist, Dr. Hall directs program evaluation, dissemination and implementation research, and synthesis and translation activities. Before joining CDC in January 2007, Dr. Hall served as a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, where she trained school and mental health counselors. She is also trained as a school, community, and child clinical psychologist.

Dr. Hall earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology at Hollins University. She received a Master of Science in counseling psychology and a PhD in school, community, and child clinical psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. She is licensed as a clinical psychologist.

Dr. Hall served as an on-camera subject matter expert for Dating Matters, a free online, interactive training designed to help educators, youth-serving organizations, and others working with teens understand the risk factors and warning signs associated with teen dating violence.

**Monica Rousseau, DrPH**

Public Health Analyst  
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy  
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)  
Department of Health and Human Services

Monica Rousseau serves as a Public Health Analyst within the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy at the Health Resources and Services Administration. In this role, Monica analyzes behavioral health regulations and policies, develops and administers grants within the Rural Opioid Response Program, and coordinates efforts to improve mental health initiatives among federal and non-federal partners. Prior to joining HRSA, Monica coordinated a series of collaborative, community-based efforts to reduce rates of suicide and substance use disorders in Tampa Bay Florida. Monica has her Doctorate of Public Health, and has served on several local, state, and national task forces to improve public health.



**Meeting Coordinator****Alex Córdova, MPA**

Program Lead

USDA Center for Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

Community Development Specialist

Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

Alex is the Program Lead for the USDA Center for Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, leading secretarial and departmental initiatives with a focus on public private partnerships, capacity building, and nutrition security. He also serves on the management team of the Local and Regional Food Systems Working Group, as well as the internal advisory committee of the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP).

Alex joined USDA in 2016 as a Presidential Management Fellow with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He also served as a Strategic Engagement Specialist and Promise Zone Desk Officer with USDA Rural Development. He holds a BA in Sociology, and in Religious Studies, with a minor in American Ethnic Studies, from Willamette University in Salem, OR. He obtained a Master's in Public Administration from the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs with a concentration in public and nonprofit management in 2015.